

**CABARRUS COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
ANNEX O
ANIMAL CONTROL AND PROTECTION**

Primary Agencies

- Sheriff's Department - Animal Control
- Emergency Management
- Cooperative Extension
- County Animal Response Team (CART)

Support Agencies

- Veterinarian Association
- Red Cross
- Municipal Animal Control
- Cabarrus Health Alliance
- Humane Society of Concord
- Local Animal Shelters

I. PURPOSE

This annex describes the system to protect, control, and care for animals during emergency situations.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Any emergency situation that threatens humans also threatens both domestic and wild animals.
2. It is necessary to provide water, shelter, food, and medical treatment for pets, livestock, and wildlife affected during an emergency situation.
3. Relocation, sheltering, and relief efforts for pets and livestock may be required to protect them.
4. Domestic pets will be permitted at Cabarrus County (County) personnel shelter locations. Pet owners are responsible for the care of these animals while they remain at the shelter site.
5. Farm families must continue to care for livestock left behind in evacuated areas.

6. The Emergency Management Coordinator prepares procedures to allow the reentry of those with farm animals to care for livestock. This effort requires animal feed, water, transportation, and veterinary treatment for injured animals.

B. Assumptions

1. The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an upcoming emergency, will take reasonable steps to shelter and provide care for their animals.
2. Cabarrus County can expect to receive outside assistance from the state agencies and the private sector.
3. Personnel with proper training and protective equipment will be available to re-enter evacuated areas to rescue and care for livestock or domestic animals.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A. The sheltering and protection of pets and livestock during an emergency is the responsibility of their owners. Animal owners must include plans for animal care as they prepare their emergency preparedness plans.
- B. The County provides food and medical treatment to stranded animals when the situation prevents evacuation to a shelter and resources are available.
- C. The Sheriff's Department is the lead agency for animal control during emergencies.
- D. Animal control and protection operations includes rescue, shelter, control, feeding, and preventive immunization of animals left homeless, lost, or strayed as a result of the emergency. The Animal Control Officer (ACO) supervises this effort and determines resource requirements.
- E. The ACO maintains a record of all animals placed into shelters to assist in returning these animals to their owners during recovery. If the animals cannot be returned to their owners, local animal protection groups may be allowed to relocate any animals that are unclaimed to other shelters. These actions are coordinated with the ACO prior to the animal leaving the temporary shelter.
- F. If necessary, the ACO supervises the disposal of animal remains in accordance with established control procedures.
- G. The Emergency Management Coordinator requests volunteers from the Humane Society of Concord and Greater Cabarrus County and similar organizations to assist with the care of animals during emergencies.
- H. Personnel from the Cooperative Extension Office trains and assists these volunteers prior to deployment to local farms to care for livestock. No untrained volunteers are permitted to care for livestock.

- I. The Emergency Management Coordinator coordinates all requests for animal protection assistance and resources such as food, medicine, shelter, specialized personnel, and additional veterinary medical support.
- J. There are additional shelter and support resources available from private farms, feed stores, boarding kennels, stables, and dog and horse clubs. These businesses and/or groups may provide personnel, equipment, and facilities to shelter and care for pets belonging to evacuated citizens and those animals evacuated from established animal shelters when those facilities are full or destroyed by the incident.
- K. The Sheriff's Department and personnel from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission capture and confine any wild animals out of their natural habitats. This includes any wildlife endangered by the emergency situation or those that pose a threat to human life. These agencies return displaced wildlife to its natural habitat as soon as safely possible.
- L. Red Cross-operated shelters permit pets to be housed in separate areas of the shelters. The pet care areas of the personnel shelters are not suitable for uncommon, exotic, or dangerous animals, and these animals are not allowed to remain at the shelter site. If the shelter site is not suited to animal care or is unable to accommodate additional animals, the ACO supervises the movement of animals to an animal shelter. Livestock animals are not permitted at personnel shelters.
- M. The CART plays a critical role in the care of pets at all shelter sites. This volunteer, non-government team is trained and equipped to handle emergency situations and can provide shelter and care for the pets of evacuated citizens. While the CART assists with animal care at personnel shelter, the pet owners at the shelters are responsible for the care and feeding of their pets.
- N. The CART also assists with the search and rescue of lost animals, as needed.
- O. The Emergency Management Coordinator is the County point of contact to request assistance from the CART. Once deployed, the CART reports to the County ACO, who supervises the use of the team.
- P. The Public Information Officer provided information on the care of pets and livestock during emergencies. This includes animal shelter locations for pets, livestock, and wildlife during emergency situations.
- Q. The Public Information Officer (PIO) coordinates all media activities and press releases associated with the protection of animals. Additionally, the PIO performs the following tasks:
 - 1. Provides instructions on the preparation of pets and livestock for an impending emergency

2. Provides information on the location of temporary animal shelters to drop off lost or stray animals, animals that that people cannot care for, or animals that need immediate medical assistance
 3. During response operations, develops a system to direct inquiries on lost pets and livestock to the appropriate animal shelters
- R. The Emergency Management Coordinator requests veterinary support, when needed. The first contact is local Veterinarians and, if additional support is necessary, through the State Emergency Operations Center.
- S. The ACO supervises the disposal of animal carcasses using normal procedures. Should the number of carcasses exceed local disposal capabilities, the Emergency Management Coordinator requests assistance from the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC). All disposal operations are coordinated with the Cabarrus Health Alliance to avoid any dangers to public health.

IV. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- A. The Cabarrus County Sheriff's Department manages all activities related to animal protection and control during a disaster.
- B. The ACO directs operations using the Incident Command System (ICS).
- C. The Sheriff's Department coordinates all animal control efforts with the Emergency Management Coordinator. If necessary, the Emergency Management Coordinator authorizes the ACO to conduct direct liaison with appropriate state agencies.

V. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

- A. Staffing assignments for positions in the EOC allow for continuous operations.
- B. Selection and assignment of personnel is the responsibility of the agencies represented.
- C. Once assigned to the EOC, the Emergency Management Coordinator (EOC Manager) supervises these personnel.
- D. In the event that the primary EOC is not functional, the Emergency Management Coordinator activates an alternate EOC and notifies the Board of Commissioners of this change. Transportation is provided to any County Commissioners that cannot reach the EOC locations.
- E. Orders of Succession:
 1. Sheriff
 2. Chief Deputy

3. Operations Captain
 4. Animal Control Officer
- F. Orders of succession for departments and agencies supporting animal control and protection are in accordance with the established procedure for those departments and agencies.

Appendix 1 – Cabarrus County Animal Response Plan

CABARRUS COUNTY ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)

ANIMAL RESPONSE PLAN

I. PURPOSE

To define the role and responsibilities of the Cabarrus Animal Response Team (CART) and its members during an emergency in providing for the protection of animals, both wild and domestic, from the effects of disasters through the provision of emergency services.

II. SCOPE

This plan is intended for use by CART to take immediate action by providing a means of animal care and control to minimize suffering in the event of a large-scale emergency. This action will be aimed at all animals that may be affected by an emergency, whether such animal is owned, stray, domestic, or wild. This will include animals whose owners are incapable of caring for them or are a danger to themselves or the public. Actions CART may take include rescue, shelter, control, feeding, preventive immunization of animals, and emergency veterinary care. If possible, all animals will be reunited with their owners. If they cannot be returned to their owners, arrangements will be made with foster placements or local humane/rescue organizations.

Wild animals should be left to their own survival instincts. Wild animals out of their natural habitats that are a danger either to themselves or the public will be the responsibility of specifically trained CART members and licensed wildlife rehabilitators in accordance with North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission rules and regulations.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A. This SOP will provide the guidelines for CART to be used in planning for, responding to, and recovery from disasters involving animals.
- B. Animal Response operations will be conducted under the Incident Command System (ICS).
- C. During some emergencies, CART operations will act in conjunction with County shelter operations and/or the EOC. During those incidents/events, this annex works in conjunction with Annex L – Shelter and Mass Care.
- D. Each support organization will contribute to the overall coordinated response as directed by CART, but will retain full control over its own resources and personnel.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Organization

1. The Cabarrus County Sheriff's Department Animal Control Division will be the lead agency for the Cabarrus CART.
2. The CART will coordinate animal response operations, under the direction of Animal Control.
3. The CART will assist in statewide operations, under the direction of State Animal Response Team (SART), when appropriate.

B. Responsibilities

1. Recruit and assemble a Cabarrus County Animal Response Team.
2. Maintain a current list of kennels and Veterinarian hospitals within Cabarrus County.
3. Identify, survey, secure owner permission, and maintain a list of temporary animal shelter sites to be used in the event of an emergency.
4. Establish public information and education programs regarding animal response.
5. In conjunction with Emergency Management, provide for Animal Response Team training.
6. Coordinate with the SART, Health Department, and other agencies to provide technical and logistical support during animal response operations.
7. Provide suitable identification for CART members for access to the scene or affected area.
8. Assist with coordinating the disposal of deceased animals that may impact the public health.

V. NOTIFICATION

- A. The Animal Response Plan will be activated in the event of a large-scale emergency or other significant disaster causing a major requirement for animal protection. When the plan is activated, the CART Standard Operating Procedures will immediately go into effect.
- B. Emergency Management or 9-1-1 staff will notify the Animal Control Division when the Animal Response Plan is activated. If the EOC has been activated, a liaison from the Animal Control Division will report to the EOC upon request.
- C. The Emergency Management Director, based on the extent of the disaster, will implement the CART Notification/Recall Roster to alert agencies and personnel as needed.

- D. Notifications methods may include phone, cell phone, pager, fax transmission, e-mail, or if necessary, the use of television/radio announcements.

VI. PUBLIC INFORMATION

- A. CART spokesperson, appointed by the Animal Control Supervisor, will be responsible for working with the Emergency Operations Center Public Information Officer to coordinate all media activities and press releases in association with CART activities.
- B. Public information responsibilities may include:
 - 1. Delivering instructions to the public to prepare their pets for an impending emergency and instruction for minor medical responses (first aid) for injured pets
 - 2. Initiating a system to direct inquiries on lost pets to appropriate shelters
 - 3. Other information appropriate to the emergency and recovery operations

VII. ANIMAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- A. An initial animal needs assessment will be performed by CART to determine the specific health and safety needs of animals. This assessment will include impact to pre-existing animal shelters, kennels/Veterinarian hospitals, and the animal population of the County. This information will be provided by EOC and used in planning preliminary responses by CART and other concerned agencies; identifying objectives, resources available, and resources needed; and identifying if additional aid needs to be requested.
- B. If aid is requested from SART, the SART Field Operations Assessment Team will conduct an onsite assessment. The onsite assessment will consist of three areas:
 - 1. Animal Needs
 - a. Livestock/poultry
 - b. Small animal
 - c. Exotic/wildlife
 - 2. Safety Issues
 - a. Hazardous rescue conditions
 - b. Dangerous animals or compromised handling situation/facilities
 - c. Potential disease outbreaks
 - d. Other safety issues

3. County Resources

- a. Personnel available to man CART and also carry out tasks at hand
- b. Resources (equipment, special needs)
- c. Function of existing facilities such as power, water/sewage, roadways, communication, landfills, etc.
- e. Status of County entities such as Department of Animal Control, Cooperative Extension, Department of Transportation, etc.

VIII. ANIMAL SHELTERS

Animal shelters are operated in accordance with Shelter Operation Guidelines. In some cases, animal shelters may be collocated with human shelters, but in a different area of the facility.

A. Evacuated Domestic Pets

In the event of evacuation of citizens for disasters not large enough to require activation of temporary pet shelters, domestic pets owned by evacuated citizens are sheltered at private boarding kennels and veterinary hospitals (which have agreed to participate in the Cabarrus County Disaster program-list is maintained by the Animal Control Division). Pets will be sheltered as close to the evacuation area as possible.

B. Temporary Pet Shelters

1. In the event of activation of evacuation shelters for citizens, a representative of the Cabarrus County Emergency Management notifies the CART director (or designee) to request the opening of the pet shelter. If needed, the CART director also notifies participating kennels and veterinary hospitals.
2. As resources are available, shelters for citizens have CART members present to intake and process pets for transport to the temporary pet shelter or to the nearest participating kennel or veterinary hospitals.
3. Citizens with functional needs may require assistance in evacuating their pets. If these individuals are unwilling or unable to make special arrangements for the sheltering of their pets, then transportation of their pets to the closest pet shelter is coordinated through the CART director (or designee).

C. Stray/Lost Domestic Pets

1. All stray/lost domestic pets recovered during or after a disaster are sheltered at the Cabarrus County Animal Shelter or the temporary pet shelter if activated. Any pets whose owners cannot care for them or domestic pets found by citizens are also sheltered

at these sites. If space allows, all stray/lost domestic pets are placed in a separate area from the general domestic animal population.

2. Participating kennels and veterinary hospitals would only be requested to help with these animals in an overflow situation. This request originates from Cabarrus County Emergency Management or Cabarrus Animal Control Division.

D. Evacuated and Stray/Lost Livestock

1. Due to the size of most livestock and the inability to transport large numbers of farm animals, owners are expected to develop shelter and/or evacuation plans for their own animals.
2. In the case of a large-scale emergency, temporary use of the Cabarrus County Fairgrounds and Mt. Pleasant High School may be used as shelter facilities for livestock.

E. Incoming Animals

All animals taken into custody during a disaster become part of the shelter population. A record of each animal is recorded and maintained.

Holding Periods

1. Stray Animal

A stray animal is considered to be any animal that is running at large; wandering off its owner's property; appears to be lost, unwanted, or abandoned; or whose owner is unknown or not readily available. Stray animals picked up and sheltered during a disaster are held for 14 days.

2. Owned Animal

If an owner brings his pet(s) to a temporary shelter or otherwise arranges for the animal to be delivered to a temporary shelter, the animal is held in 7-day increments with the expectation that the owner will contact CART personnel with an update at the end of each 7-day period. The maximum period an animal is held is 4 weeks. If an owner does not contact CART at the end of a 7-day period or if the animal has not been reclaimed after 4 weeks, attempts are made (and documented) based on the information on the intake form. If the owner cannot be contacted within 4 weeks, the animal is considered abandoned.

3. Unclaimed/Claimed Animals:

Animals that are not claimed within the time frames mentioned above may then be sent to foster homes until such time animals are then considered to be abandoned and may then be placed for adoption. Claimed animals with permission of owner may be placed in foster care.

4. Wild Animals

Unless wild animals are in life-threatening environments, these animals should be left alone. If the wild animal is deemed to be in eminent danger or a danger to the public, then the animal may be removed by Animal Control Officers or Wildlife Officers. If appropriate, they may be transported to a veterinary hospital that treats wild animals or to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

F. Incapacitation of Pre-Existing Shelters

If the temporary shelters along with the participating kennels and veterinary hospitals are damaged, destroyed, or overwhelmed, other veterinary facilities, stables, or similar facilities may be requested by the CART director to serve as shelter and/or medical facilities.

G. Veterinary Medical Facilities:

1. The temporary shelter will have triage area setup as soon as resources are available to assess incoming animals. Minor treatments are handled by CART staff under the direction of the Triage Veterinarian.
2. Owned animals suffering from moderate to severe problems are transported to participating veterinary hospitals for appropriate care. The owners of these transported animals are financially responsible for the care of their animals.
3. Stray animals suffering from minor injuries are treated with first aid measures and given appropriate pain relief at the discretion of the attending Veterinarian. Stray animals suffering from life-threatening injuries or disease may be euthanized at the discretion of the attending Veterinarian or Animal Control Officer.
4. Staff Volunteers from the CART provide routine medical treatments for the animals in the temporary shelters under the direction of the attending Veterinarian. During large-scale disasters, this staff may be assisted by the North Carolina SART Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT) and/or national VMAT personnel.

Attachment I – Pet Shelter Operation Guidelines

I. ACTIVATION

The Cabarrus County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) contacts the Cabarrus County Cabarrus Animal Response Team (CART) Manager to make the decision on activation of the shelters. The Operations Manager decides whether to activate participating kennels and veterinary hospitals and/or the temporary pet shelter.

II. LOCATION

The temporary pet shelter will be determined by the Emergency Management Director and Animal Control Supervisor.

Rescued livestock may be housed at the Cabarrus County Fairgrounds or Mt. Pleasant High School if appropriate.

III. INCOMING ANIMALS

A. Definition

Incoming animals include all rescued animals, owned animals brought to the temporary shelter, and strays found during a disaster.

B. Intake

1. All incoming animals are first processed through the designated intake area of the temporary shelter.
2. Staff will complete an intake form on each animal to identify the animal. As resources are available, pictures are taken of each animal to be part of the intake form. All intake forms are maintained for the duration of the disaster as well as for a significant time after the disaster.
3. All incoming animals are identified with tags/collars, which are correlated with the intake form.
4. From the intake area, the animal is moved to triage triage assessment by the Triage Veterinarian/staff (if available).
5. After the triage assessment, the animal is moved to the housing area or foster home.
6. Any animal suspected by the intake personnel to be particularly aggressive or a danger to personnel is immediately brought to the attention of the Shelter Manager or Triage Veterinarian before further processing. If the animal has an owner and is deemed to be too dangerous to safely shelter, the shelter reserves the right to refuse to house the animal. If the animal is a stray and is deemed to be too dangerous to safely shelter, then in consultation with CART Manager, Animal Control personnel and veterinary staff, the animal may be euthanized.
7. As resources are available, CART volunteers are assigned to the various shelters for citizens, to accept pets for transport to the temporary shelter. These personnel complete the intake form at the citizen shelter. The animal is given an appropriate tag/collar and transported in a crate to the temporary shelter. Once at the pet shelter, these animals are processed as all other incoming animals except that the intake form and identification have already been completed.

IV. TRIAGE

As veterinary personnel are available, a triage area is set up as part of the temporary pet shelter.

A. Examination

Each animal is examined by a Veterinarian or assistant under the direction of a Veterinarian and assessed. Any minor ailments or conditions are treated as resources are available.

B. Injured/Ill Animals

1. Owned animals suffering from significant injury or illness are referred to or transported to a participating veterinary hospital. The owners are expected to follow up on their pet and contact the veterinary facility within three days. The owners are also expected to be financially responsible for the veterinary care of their pet.
2. Stray animals suffering from moderate injury or illness are transported to a participating veterinary hospital for reasonable first aid treatment and pain control until their condition allows for their return to the temporary shelter.
3. Stray animals suffering from severe injury or illness may be euthanized at the discretion of the attending Veterinarian or Animal Control Officer.

C. Medical Care

After the initial assessment, any animal requiring continued treatment is given a medical care form detailing the treatment and its frequency. This card accompanies the animal to the housing area and is attached to its run/cage.

V. HOUSING AREA

A. Identification

As an animal is moved to the housing area, cage cards, medical cards, and other identification and exercise forms, relevant to that animal are attached to the kennel. These papers move with the animal any time its housing is changed/moved.

B. Sanitation

Each kennel is sanitized before another animal is allowed to be housed there. Any spills or excrement within the kennel that occur while the animal is housed are removed as promptly as possible.

C. Arrangement of Housing

1. If at all possible, cats and dogs are housed separately or at least as far apart as practical. Cats are left in their crates most of the time with the occasional time spent in a larger exercise area if available.
2. Young puppies are housed apart from the general dog population if possible. Their exercise area will be separate from that of the general population in an attempt to prevent the spread of viral diseases.

3. Resources permitting, dogs are exercised 2–3 times daily, either secured on leashes or loose in a well-confined area. To avoid injuries from fights, dogs should not be left to play with other dogs.
4. If room is available, dogs or cats suspected of harboring potentially contagious diseases are housed separately in an isolation area.

D. Documentation

All forms (intake forms, identification pictures, medical exam forms, medical care forms, feed forms, exercise forms) are filled out and initialed by CART volunteers who perform the services. These records are maintained for a reasonable amount of time after the disaster.

E. Staff

The staff will consist of Cabarrus County CART members and recruited volunteers. Volunteers are identified by badges, and receive orientation and training as to their duties and responsibilities.

F. Supplies/Services

Animal food companies, medical suppliers, water suppliers, and cleaning product suppliers are contacted by the Cabarrus County EOC (or designee) and requested to begin the shipment of supplies to an established delivery point. The delivery point will serve as a storage center and a distribution center for the various shelters and veterinary hospitals. Purchases are coordinated through the ICS system. If the EOC is functioning, then purchases are made through the logistics section. Durable supplies absolutely essential to the start up of the temporary shelter are acquired ahead of time as finances allow for and stored in a location easily accessible to the CART staff.